13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

175 Kiteto, some 80 miles south of Kilaya in Tanganyika. The most northerly Masai
13 were (and still are) the Samburu, who in 1908 extended more than 120 miles north-
wards towards Lake Stefanie. This vast country, with an area amounting to some
● 13 80,000 square miles, now reduced to one-half its original size, has great varieties of
altitude, climate, rainfall, and vegetation. There are three vegetation zones: the
first or northern has desert scrub and a desert type of grass; the second or medium
zone has thorn bush and medium grass; the third or highland zone has evergreen
forest, parkland, and tall grass. In Kenya, the altitude of Masailand ranges from
5,000 to 8,000 ft., though in the highlands which lie between Mounts Kenya and
Elgon in zone 3 the land in some places rises to 10,000 ft. Most of the present
Masai Land Unit is in zone 2; part of the extreme northern territory of pre-European
times is in zone 1. In Tanganyika, the Masai territory is at a lower altitude, ranging
from 6,000 to 4,000 ft. and including the isolated mountains Kilimanjaro and Meru.
Much of this country is underlie, and belongs to zone 2. In Tanganyika Masailand,
there is one permanent river, the Ruvu or Pangani, on the eastern boundary; there
are a few seasonal rivers, but for their main water supply the Masai depend on wells,
water-holes, and springs. Since only the third zone is well watered, and most of
the Masai live in zone 2, their life is conditioned to a great extent by the water
quest, and in the worst areas a form of transhumance is practised. In the present
Masai Land Unit in Kenya, the rivers are few, and the rainfall low. Most of the
few large rivers run close together in bush country useless for grazing; the main
rivers, too, rise in the Mau and unite less than halfway across the Land Unit in one
stream, the E-warno Nyiro. There are no lakes except the soda lakes Magadi, Nairasa,
and Monyara, though in the northern part formerly occupied by the Masai is the
chain of lakes Baringo, Hannington (salt), Solai, Nakuru (salt), Elmenteita, and
Naivasha. The Rift Valley, in which these lakes lie, runs right through Masailand
from south to north. In many places the floor of the valley is a wide grassy plain;
in others, as in the Kerio Valley, it is narrow with high precipitous walls. The rain-
fall is low, the average for the eight years 1915–17 and 1930–4 at Narok being
18 ins., with a range of 47 ins. to 12 ins. It is recorded that at Longido in one year
there fell only 8 ins., three of them in one night. With such a rainfall, grazing
cannot be anything but scanty. The average rainfall recorded by three gauges in
the Masai steppe between Kilaya and Arusha for nine years is 24.4 ins. There are
two seasons, the dry weather from June to November, followed by short rains in
November and December, after which there may be rain in January and February
(January: 1915, 0.60 in.; 1916, 4.20 ins.; 1917, 0.44 ins.; February: 1915, 1.48 ins.;
1916, 5.09 ins.; 1917, 5.23 ins.; though in 1918—a dry year in Kenya—there was
only 0.28 in. in February). The dry weather is called "the months of hunger" by
the Masai. The recognized wet season is from March to May, "the months of
plenty," though small amounts of rain may fall in other months, notably June to
August, which are called "the months of showers." The figures given for Kenya
refer only to Narok, and in the more arid parts there is not only less rainfall, but
the small precipitation out of season has little effect on grazing or water supply.
Except in the highland zone, where there is some seasonal variation, day tempera-
tures vary only between 60° and 68° F.

Sources: Thomson, 1885; Sandford, 1919; Page-Jones, 1948; Jones, 1936.

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

Settlement Pattern

361 In dry weather the cattle graze round the permanent waters; in the wet season
[331] the cattle are driven to the temporary waters that form, leaving the grass round the
permanent waters to rest. In both seasons the kraals are built a few miles from the
233 water supply. On one day the cattle are taken to drink, and on the next day they
341

10h Merker--6 G-6 (1895-ca.1950) 1910 PL13 Masai PL13

/Ts cntr./

E.

000 The East African steppes as habitation area of the Masai people. -- Their immigration in three corps. -- Their battles. -- Division and distribution of the land among Masai, Wakuafi, Wandorobbo and their attitude toward one another. -- Influence of the Masai people on the sedentary tribes. -- Mixture with Negroes. -- The somatic characteristics of the three branches of the Masai people show their racial connections, the ethnographic ones their social connections.

131 Between the 34th and the 39th degree of longitude and the 3rd degree north and the 7th degree south latitude, in German and British East Africa, we find large steppes, which are often designated as the Masai steppes after their inhabitants. They are bounded by hilly lands that are mostly thinly populated, especially by sedentary Negro tribes, and are more or less well cultivated.

133 The terrain formation of the steppes is sometimes flat, sometimes undulating or rolling, sometimes hilly and, in this case, usually determined by volcanic activity. This stands out especially drastically on the Kenia /Mt. Kenya/, Kilimandscharo /Kilimanjaro/, Meru, and Ol Donjo l'Ebg ai, on the latter of which, for example, on a narrowly circumscribed space /5/ between the steep slope of the Mariffa Plateau, the Olmi'and Timbori mountains, hill follows hill and almost every one bears or conceals the ruin of a crater, a landscape such as we are familiar with from photographs of the moon.

• 13 [132] The nature of the steppes, in connection with the existing amount of precipitation and water sites, make them a more than adequate region for a stock-raising nomadic people. The very nutritious soil produces excellent fodder grasses and provides salt licks in countless places.

17 131 As far back as the history, the memory and tradition of the people of these regions extend, and certainly still many, many centuries longer, these steppes were, and are up to the present

174 day, the areas of the Masai people. On the migration, or, more accurately, slow push, they came from the north, out of the

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[For information on the ecosystem and on different aspects of geographical description, *passim*, see category 116, pp. 13, 31-36, 57-64, 89-116, 130-135, 147-171, 375-378, and 388-413.]